

Message Text

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63

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2745

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, EINV, FR

SUBJECT: CENTRONICS, CODEX AND OTHER APPLICATIONS -
RESTRAINTS ON AMERICAN INVESTMENT AND TRADE IN FRANCE

REF: STATE 138177, PARIS 17196

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR JULY 6, FRANCOIS POLGE DE COMBRET, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRIAL POLICY ADVISOR TO PRESIDENT GISCARD, EXPRESSED STRONG DOUBT THAT CENTRONICS AND PARALLEL INVESTMENT APPLICATIONS WOULD BE APPROVED. HE SAID GOF POLICY IS TO BUILD DOMESTIC EDF PERIPHERAL EQUIPMENT CAPACITY AROUND THREE FRENCH CONTROLLED GROUPS AND GOVERNMENT WILL DO ALL IT CAN TO DISCOURAGE COMPETING IMPORTS UNTIL THESE GROUPS HAVE SUFFICIENT TECHNOLOGICAL AND MARKET STRENGTH TO WITHSTAND FOREIGN COMPETITION. HE LISTED THREE GROUPS AS CIIB/TELEMECANIQUE (CONTROLLED BY THOMPSON BRANDT), SINTRA/INTERTECHNIQUE (CGF), AND LOGABAX.

2. WHEN EMBOFF POINTED OUT THAT DENIAL OF AMERICAN APPLICATIONS WOULD CONSTITUTE BLATANT PROTECTIONISM IN VIOLATION OF BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL FRENCH COMMITMENTS TO U.S., COMBRET SIMPLY SHRUGGED AND SAID THAT IF FRANCE EVER HOPES TO HAVE A VIABLE MINI-COMPUTER INDUSTRY IT HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO PROVIDE UMBRELLA OF PROTECTION DURING WEANING PERIOD. HE
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SUGGESTED THAT U.S. FIRMS EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF

LICENSING OR JOINT VENTURE ARRANGEMENTS WITH FRENCH
GROUPS CONCERNED. HE ALSO SEEMED JOLTED WHEN TOLD
THAT THIS WAS FIRST TIME WE HAD HAD A STRAIGHT ANSWER
FROM ANY GOF SOURCE ON THESE CASES.
RUSH

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NNN

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